


■ special issue:

JUDAISM

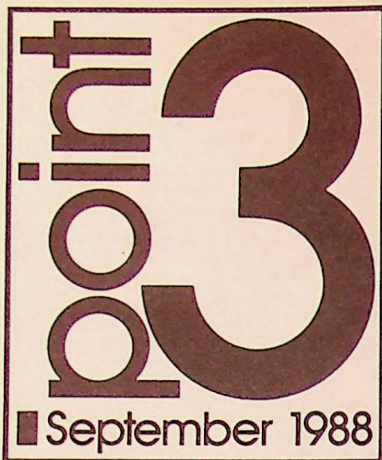
*'Hear O'Israel!
 The Lord our God,
 the Lord is One!'* ►

The opening lines of the Shema,
 the central Jewish prayer. (Deut. 6:4)

The magazine of

TOCH 





The magazine of **TOC H**



Toc H is a movement of people who seek to build friendships, and offer service, across the barriers that usually divide us from one another. The basic unit is the group – at best a good cross-section of the local neighbourhood – which meets together regularly, and seeks to serve the community around it. Toc H was founded in 1915 by the Rev P. B. 'Tubby' Clayton, and since then has been providing opportunities for people to test the Christian way by practical experiment.

All members pledge themselves to try:

1. To welcome all in friendship and lessen by habit of thought, word and deed the prejudices which separate people.
2. To give personal service.
3. To find their own convictions while listening with respect to the views of others.
4. To acknowledge the spiritual nature of man and to test the Christian way by trying it.

This magazine is a forum for ideas about Toc H and about the world as well as a record of Toc H service. Its title derives from the third of these Four Points.

For God's Sake

The one thing most Christians can say about Jews is that they don't believe Jesus was the Son of God and that they still await the Messiah. Yet Jesus is mentioned rarely in these pages, 'the Messiah' not at all and another great preoccupation of Christians, life after death, is never touched on. It is interesting to enquire where the religious beliefs of others diverge from one's own and where they coincide. But how much more illuminating to listen, while members of another faith tell you what is important to *them* rather than respond to questions about what is important to *you*. The queries you are left with at the end teach you as much as the 'answers' you have received. The omission of the Messiah and the afterlife says a great deal about contemporary Judaism.

Any magazine of this size can only hope to scratch the surface of a religion. As one of our contributors said 'You wouldn't dream of trying to "do" Christianity in this way' – and Christianity is half the age of Judaism. Yet it is a beginning, and the first of many such beginnings. We shall, at intervals over the coming months, be looking at all the major religions in a similar way – all of those, at least, that have a significant number of followers in this country. Most of us know little or nothing about faiths other than Christianity. Yet we live at a time when the religious and cultural pattern of Britain is becoming even more variegated; and at a time when Church leaders are fully committing themselves to inter-faith dialogue.

Christianity has always made claims to an exclusive possession of the truth. To many this gives a feeling of security; others it alienates. To the latter, such a claim seems arrogant and foolish – as somebody said to me recently 'Once you've met a holy man from another religion the idea of exclusivity is dead'. But that doesn't mean the death of Christianity, as is witnessed

by the numerous committed Christians who devote much of their time and energy to work and dialogue with those of other traditions. This is a great change in Christian thinking; for such people are, of course, *not* looking for converts. The basis of inter-faith dialogue is complete mutual respect. It isn't just an interesting exercise; it is a religious experience in its own right. It necessitates a new approach to 'truth'.

Tensions between Jews and Christians have always been particularly great because their assertions about Jesus seem irreconcilable. Worse than that – the anti-Jewish feeling which seems to have been around from classical times was polished up, legitimised and sanctified by the charge that the Jews had killed the Son of God. Throughout subsequent centuries, people could justify their fear and hatred of a group perceived as idiosyncratic and defiantly separate by the belief that they had committed the ultimate crime, *deicide*.

That Christians should have been guilty of so much of the persecution of the Jewish people is tragic. Christianity was born from Judaism; the message of Jesus was pervaded by the tradition from which he came. Learning about Judaism can help recapture the flavour of that tradition, simultaneously opening a window onto a thought world challengingly different from our own. Such possibilities for explanation and exchange between faiths is one of the great opportunities of our age. Talking to Jews one is particularly humbled: Christians, with their theology of suffering, cannot fail to be awed by what they have undergone. 'No other people', wrote the great Christian thinker Peter Abelard in the 12th century, 'has borne so much for God's sake'.

Judith Rice

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A Law for living by



Photo: Peter Fisher

Studying the Torah at the Kerem House School in North London

Jeremy Rosen, an Orthodox rabbi based in London, discusses what it means to be Jewish in today's world. He looks at faith, law and behaviour and examines the dilemmas posed by the commitment to a Jewish state.

Who is a Christian? What is Christianity? These are questions that we don't often ask. But as a Jew I am very often asked to explain what a Jew is and what Judaism is all about. But it isn't that easy to describe a Christian. What sort of Christian do we mean? Catholic, Baptist, Russian Orthodox, or Mormon? These are all 'Christians'. And when is a Christian a Christian? If he goes to church every day, once a week, once a year? Is there a minimum requirement? Or perhaps baptism is enough?

So it is with Jews. Judaism as a religion or as a culture has been around for nearly 4,000 years. So there have been, naturally enough, all kinds and different shapes and sizes of Jews. And there have been also different movements within Judaism. I don't want to bore you with a list of all the different groups that have come and gone: the Pharisees, the Sadducees and others like them. But nowadays, by and large, Judaism can be divided into three groups. There are the Reform sections of Judaism which consist, generally speaking, of Jews who have tried to reshape and redefine the old traditions. Very often they have tried to make Judaism appear to fit in more to Western society and to follow certain Christian patterns, while still retaining a Jewish identity. In the middle ground you have the Orthodox Jews who officially retain their commitment to the old forms and the old traditions — though very often in practice they themselves don't keep to them as much as they really ought to. And finally you have the 'Ultra-Orthodox'. These include those Jews who walk around with

black hats, long beards, and black coats — but that's only one section of the Ultra-Orthodox spectrum. Ultra-Orthodoxy believes in maintaining the old traditions and adhering to them very strictly. It is uncompromising in the sense that in general it rejects change. That doesn't mean that there aren't developments: even Ultra-Orthodox Jews take advantage of jet planes, neurosurgery, computers and modern technology. But they certainly reject the values, the standards and the behavioural patterns of modern open Western society.

One of the ways of looking at the differences between the Orthodox and the non-Orthodox is to examine the question of authority. The Orthodox tradition goes back to the first books of the Bible, the five books of Moses, and accepts these as the basis of the constitution. They would argue that this constitution has gone on developing and progressing over the last 3,000 years, in the way any other legal system does. The biblical period was followed by the rabbinical period, in which the *Talmud* was compiled. This book of Jewish law and custom describes the developments over the 1,000 year period that succeeded the biblical period. After this, Jewish law continued to expand as a result of new experiences and new developments, a process which has gone on to this very day. And so when an Orthodox Jew wants to know how to deal with problems of heart transplants, abortion, or contraception, or with problems relating to maintaining an army in a modern state, he will go back through the legal system in exactly the same way as a lawyer working in this country will do if faced with a legal problem. Reform traditions don't feel bound by this same constitution and they feel freer to do as they see fit according to changing circumstances. Now, as I belong to the Orthodox tradition, I hope you will excuse me if I concentrate on describing to you what Orthodox Judaism is.

Continued overleaf/ 3

■ Continued from previous page

Many people think that Judaism is concerned only with the law. It is often accused of being rigid and legalistic. But this is to completely misunderstand the nature of the tradition. If you go back to the five books of Moses, written in our view 1,000 years before Jesus arrived on earth, you will find in Leviticus a command to love your neighbour as yourself, and to be kind and generous to the poor, to the needy and to those who are less fortunate than yourself. But there is no distinction drawn within the five books of Moses between laws which we might call 'ritual' and laws that we might call 'ethical'. Our tradition believes that all the laws came from God and are as important as each other in different ways. And so it's all very well and good to love your neighbour as yourself in theory, but unless you turn it into practice, unless you behave according to your ideals, the ideals become vague, sentimental expressions of good will. It's not enough in our tradition just to keep the seventh day as a day of rest — we have to make it as different as we possibly can from the other days of the week. So although it's true that there are a whole lot of laws describing what you can and can't do on a Saturday, these are all designed to help create an atmosphere in which spirituality and warmth permeate the atmosphere of the home. Somebody who only follows the letter of the law in Judaism and doesn't follow the spirit is, if you like, as incomplete as somebody who follows the spirit and doesn't follow the letter. The ideal is to follow them both.

'it's very difficult to formulate laws commanding people to believe'.

If you look at the Bible, at the five books of Moses in particular, you will find hardly any commandments to believe. Even the first of the Ten Commandments doesn't say you must believe in God. It says *"I am the Lord your God"*. This is another clue to the atmosphere of Judaism. The Bible again is concerned with good behaviour — that is what really counts. And although it's true that one has to come to terms with God and understand God, it's very difficult to formulate laws commanding people to believe. After all, how do you test whether somebody believes or not? The only way is by seeing how they actually behave. In this sense Judaism is much closer to Islam and the Eastern religions, which concentrate on behaviour, on family values and togetherness in almost a tribal sense. Although it's true that Christianity developed out of Judaism it was very powerfully influenced by the Greek approach to life. Greek philosophy and ideology influenced Christianity to the point where the right thoughts and the right philosophy, the right way of thinking — what later became called "theology" — became extremely important. Orthodox Judaism has very little interest in theology. And although it's true that over the years, outstanding Orthodox rabbis have tried to explain Judaism through philosophical and theological patterns of thinking, in general, Judaism has been concerned with 'doing' rather than with intellectual thinking.

Hillel and Shammai

Hillel, in addition to being a very learned rabbi, possessed the virtues of humility and meekness in the highest degree; Shammai, although also a rabbi of great learning, had a very hasty temper.

A heathen came to Shammai and said: *'I wish to become a convert to Judaism, but only on condition that you will teach me the whole Law whilst I stand upon one leg.'* The short-tempered rabbi, offended at so unreasonable a demand, drove the man away. He next went to Hillel and made the same request. Hillel answered him with these words: *'Remember, whatsoever you yourself dislike, do not do to your neighbour. This is the essence of the law, and everything else is but its explanation; now go away and learn.'* The heathen thanked him, and became a good and pious man.

So there are two sources that one turns to to see how Judaism responds to modern problems. On the one hand there is the law, and on the other hand there is history and precedent. Judaism has a much more flexible attitude to abortion and contraception than, for example, does Catholicism. Going back to Talmudic law, 2,000 years ago, you find the proposition that you may abort a child to preserve the mother's life. You find laws to the effect that under certain circumstances contraception may be used. In fact, almost any modern issue that you would care to mention has some kind of basis, if not in biblical law, then in Talmudic law. Then history plays a part. For example, at the time of Moses it was considered perfectly normal to have slaves. After all, slavery wasn't abolished in this part of the world until about 200 years ago. But the laws that applied to slaves in the Bible no longer have to apply if there are no slaves. Similarly sacrificing in a temple fell by the wayside when there was no temple. However, other laws, that didn't depend on a temple or on external circumstances, like the dietary laws, continued. People think that the dietary laws were to do with hygiene but in fact there are separate laws in the tradition that say that no matter whether the food is the right, approved type or not, if it's unhealthy you're not allowed to eat it.

'the home was always considered to be far more important than the synagogue'

New developments came into Judaism, such as the synagogue, which was introduced at the time of the Babylonian exile and was meant as a refuge in the commercial parts of town, where people who had no time for spirituality could take a little time off to study and later perhaps to pray. But the home was always considered to be far more important than the synagogue. What is interesting is that as Jews become less Orthodox, the synagogue tends to play a greater part in their lives, and as they become more Orthodox, the home plays a greater part in their lives. This is one of the things that I meant when I said that Judaism has been influenced by Christianity. If you go into synagogues in this country you will find that they are big, formal buildings, very often with stained glass windows, sometimes with an organ. It's as though they're trying to be a little bit like a church. Whereas if you go into more Orthodox environments you will find that the synagogue is usually no more than a room in which people come together to pray and to study and then go on with their own business. And for the Ultra-Orthodox, the house of study is more important than the house of prayer. Although the synagogue, like the church or the mosque, has come to symbolise the public face of a religion, the real test of somebody's Judaism lies in what goes on in their home and that is the way you can judge the degree of somebody's commitment to Orthodoxy — or indeed any brand of Judaism.

'the vast majority of Jews . . . are committed to the idea of a Jewish state'.

Our tradition tells us that a human being has to try to put himself right first before he can go out into the world. Then you have to try and create the right family environment before you can try and change society. Then you try and create a positive society before you try to influence the world. Perhaps here lies the main difference between Judaism and Christianity, which has seen itself as a missionary religion having the responsibility to put the world correct first. The Jewish tradition has believed in concentrating on smaller numbers in depth in the hope that this would also have an impact on the quality of life on this planet.

Built into the Jewish tradition is the idea that one should be able to create the right sort of environment for one's religious values. Sometimes this can be done in the home, but sometimes society needs to be of a particular quality. And this was always behind the idea of Jews wanting to have their own state, the idea for thousands of years that if it would be possible to create the sort of environment that the Prophets approved of, this should be a way of bringing the spirit and the message of God to the world. Jews wanted to have their own religious world in which they were not subservient to Christianity or to Islam, to the Romans, to the Greeks or to any other power. I suppose it was no more than any other culture or nationality wanting to be free to live its own life, except that in the case of the Jews the life they were expected to lead was one that would set a good example. This was always behind the idea of wanting to return to a Jewish homeland.

In the last century, when nationalism began to sweep the world, many Jews who did not live a religious life and who did not identify with the religious aspirations of a Jewish state, felt that there were other reasons to fight for such a state. They argued that wherever Jews went they suffered from anti-Semitism, that people always told the Jews that they didn't belong anywhere, that they were outcasts, that they couldn't have equal rights in a society. And many people felt that the only way to stop anti-Semitism would be for the Jews to have a home of their own. Other people argued that there had to be somewhere for Jews to escape from wherever it was that they were persecuted. And so, different groups of people began to be interested in establishing a Jewish state. This movement became known as 'Zionism'. For 3,000 years, Jews who have been at all involved in their religion have always seen the idea of Zion, of the Jewish state, as fundamentally part of the tradition. Zionism, on the other hand, was a political movement, which said 'We can't wait for God to do this, we can't leave it to the religious people, we've got to get involved ourselves in bringing about a political solution.' Some of the Ultra-Orthodox refused to get involved with Zionism and to this very day object to it, on the grounds that it was not something brought about by God, but brought about by man. But the vast majority of Jews, I would say 90 per cent of them around the world, are committed to the idea of a Jewish state.

This does not mean that we object to other people, the Palestinians or whoever, having their own homeland. On the contrary, many of the Zionist leaders saw the necessity for all groups in the Middle East to have a land of their own, and the first President of the State of Israel talked about "a conflict of two rights". However, what the Jew demands is that at least his rights should be listened to. And although it is quite true that some Palestinians have said they wouldn't object to an independent Jewish state, the PLO still publicly has not accepted the right of Israel to exist. The result is that the vast majority of Jews are terribly upset at the conflict that takes place in the Middle East. are very unhappy to see Jewish men and women having to serve in the armed forces and having to be in an army of occupation. But they recognise that until there is an agreed political solution there is no alternative. Part of the Jewish legal tradition is that we have to defend ourselves if we are attacked. If people say they wish to destroy us we feel we have a right to protect our homes and our children. We all agree that to be caught in a military conflict is unhealthy spiritually, it's bad for the soul. But at least where there's life there's still a soul. If you allow your body to be destroyed, there is nothing left to pray with.

'our religion does not believe that we are right and that everybody else is wrong'.

Most Jews that I know of would therefore welcome a solution in the Middle East, and would welcome peaceful co-existence. After all, Israel did vote in favour of partition at the United Nations in 1947. And if we look at history we see that the Jewish tradition has been in favour of giving up territory for the sake of peace. However, you only do that if you can guarantee that there will be peace, and with the divisions that exist in the PLO and within the Arab world at the moment it is hardly surprising that most Jews are a little sceptical. However, by the agreement which Israel and Egypt came to in pursuit of peace, Israel did give up territory and, thank God, at the moment the peace seems to be holding.

My final point I hope will go some way towards reinforcing the impression I've tried to create. People often accuse the Jews of being arrogant, of being 'the chosen people', of being separate. Now, our religion does not believe that we are right and that everybody else is wrong. It believes that other people of other religions can be as right in their way as we are in ours. As the Talmud says, the good people of all the nations of the world will be part of the world to come. In that sense we are certainly not exclusive. But we do believe that we have a tradition that was given to Jews and that is worthwhile maintaining, that it is our responsibility to try and keep that tradition alive and that this is the contribution that we can make to the world and to world peace. It is a tradition based on behaviour, on doing the right things, on creating an intense religious, spiritual atmosphere in the home, trying one's best to lead a good life. No one is perfect, we all make mistakes, we all let the side down, but if you want to know what the flavour and the mood of the religious tradition of the Jews is — don't pay attention to what people say, pay attention to what people do.



The Israeli Flag

■ **Jeremy Rosen is advisor to the Chief Rabbi on Jewish-Christian relations. He is Rabbi of the Western Synagogue, London, and a former Headmaster of Carmel College.**



Photo: Werner Braun

In the home — 'Shabbat'

Lillith's comeback?

Let me tell you a story, a Jewish legend. It's about Lillith — Adam's first wife. She was independent, his equal in all things and, seeing no reason to obey her husband, refused to sleep with him. So Adam divorced her and God created Eve — an altogether different woman and one who would do his bidding. Lillith, furious at being cast aside, wreaks her revenge to this day by killing new-born babies. The moral is clear. Independent women are evil and destructive while good women obey their husbands, complement them rather than compete, and have lots of children. Jewish feminists have taken Lillith as their symbol and see the story as typical of the Jewish attitude to women. But many observant women disagree. The roles of men and women may be different but the woman's is not inferior. They are separate, but equal.

Judaism took many centuries to develop the intricate system of law that is practised today, but certain general principles were always followed. One such was for the protection of women. This included laws covering punishment and compensation in cases of rape; divorce permitted on grounds of cruelty and neglect; and, in the marriage contract itself, a clause ensuring the return of the dowry and maintenance in the event of a divorce. A second principle related to the problems of bringing up a family. Jewish men followed a rigorous routine of prayer three times daily — ideally in the synagogue. Judaism early recognised that it was impossible for women with small children to make such regular commitments, so a rule developed absolving women from commandments that had to be fulfilled at a particular time.

This meant that they did not have to attend synagogue services. Now, faced with a choice of getting up at six for morning prayer or having a lie-in after an interrupted night with your youngest — which would you choose? Since they didn't have to go, they didn't; and since they didn't go, they lost all right to participate in the service. The women's seats were placed at the back of the

synagogue or upstairs away from the action. As they were under no obligation to pray, they could not lead others in prayer and did not count in the quorum of ten required for communal prayer. I doubt this was considered a hardship — those precious extra moments in bed were worth too much. Moreover, there were compensations. Those commandments relating to childrearing and homemaking became exclusively the realm of women: Enter the 'Jewish mother'. The religious life at home reflected her personality and her beliefs. Prayer is a daily routine but celebration — the religious joy of Sabbaths and festivals — reflects the real flavour of Judaism and is a home-based affair. The woman ensures the provision of great feasts to be consumed on these days. She prepares the 'challa' (the special bread) and lights the candles ushering in the festival. Each Sabbath her husband recites the 'woman of valour' (Proverbs 31:10) to point out what is self-evident — that the woman is in charge.

'today one has the situation of a High Court judge unable to voice an opinion in her synagogue unless it has to do with the catering'.

One other area of Jewish life confirms this — that of 'family purity'. According to Jewish law, a man must not have sexual relations with his wife during her period or for seven days after. The woman must then immerse herself in a ritual bath before normal relations resume. Though often regarded as unfair, seeing the woman as unclean, this routine has the effect of putting her in control. She decides when to make love; and the fact that for nearly two weeks each month the man cannot touch her, means she is never simply a sex-object in marriage but a companion as well. All this adds up to the conclusion that, until recent times, the lot of the Jewish woman was rather better than that of her Gentile neighbours. But things have changed rapidly in this century and it is questionable whether this is still the case.

Heir to two cultures

Rabbi Tony Bayfield is the Director of the Sternberg Centre for Judaism, in North-West London. Judith Rice went to meet him.



Rabbi Tony Bayfield

Tony Bayfield is a man who loves to lampoon stereotypes. He mocks the fact that, because he looks 'almost normal' — his suit and tie the epitome of convention, his voice and manner those of the South-East middle class — he doesn't fit most people's preconceptions that 'Jews is rich, Jews is mean, Jews is having long noses'. Sketching what it's like to be Jewish in a Christian land, he describes a series of booklets he once came across on the main religions, each one bearing on its cover a picture which characterised the faith concerned. The one on Islam showed a 'typical muezzin' summoning the faithful to prayer; the Jewish one depicted a long-bearded, black-coated character with side-curls studying a scroll. But 'as we all know, Christians look normal', so the cover of the book on Christianity simply showed a cross.

To be dogged by such caricatures is frustrating for an individual who feels himself to be 'an heir to two cultures'; whose manner and conversation declare him permeated by English, even Christian concepts, as well as by those of Judaism. Many Jews in this country find themselves in a similarly ambivalent position, performing some kind of balancing act between the modern world and their own traditions. 'There are real questions as to whether it is possible in the long run to remain a Jew and to retain one's identity — to be in a state of "creative maladjustment" — in British society, which has a track record for taking in different minority groups but then absorbing them without trace.' For the Jews this tension is potentially enormous, because of the special emphasis placed on their own tradition.

Different approaches to this problem underlie the main division within the Jewish world: for Reform Jews such as Bayfield the corpus of Jewish law is not a 'blueprint from God' but 'our perception of what God requires and therefore limited in so far as human beings are limited'. The difference between him and an Orthodox Jew would be 'over the authority of the past, the way in which change is made and the power and right of people in the present'. Reform Jews, in responding to the society they live in, have inevitably been influenced by Christianity. As a consequence, the rabbinate has started to acquire a 'quasi-priestly

Rabbi Sybil Sheridan looks at the traditional and changing roles of women in Judaism and suggests that their increasing independence is not such a new idea.

Because of the introduction of civil divorce, it is possible for a couple to find themselves legally divorced but still tied to each other religiously. This can lead to great hardship for the wife, who, unlike her husband, will not be able to remarry. Because of the changing roles of the sexes, women are no longer content to limit their sphere of influence to the home. Jewish women have always worked — extreme poverty required it — but today one has the strange situation of a High Court judge unable to voice an opinion in her synagogue unless it has to do with the catering. Moreover, Jewish laws specifically for women assume that women are married, whereas many today choose to be single. There is no religious joy in preparing for the Sabbath and lighting candles on your own.

There are solutions, however, depending on where in the religious spectrum one is. A 'reformation' a hundred years ago insisted that *'men and women are equal in the eyes of God'*. Mixed seating was introduced into some synagogues, women were counted in the quorum and finally, in the sixties, women were ordained as rabbis and now lead congregations in the Reform and Liberal movements. In Orthodox communities this is not possible, but women are now participating in an area of Judaism that is considered even more important than prayer — that of study. Until recently women were not educated, but today girls are encouraged to study the scriptures, laws and traditions of Judaism like their brothers. They may not become rabbis but they can teach just like a rabbi and this is rapidly becoming the area where the committed Orthodox woman can find her religious fulfilment.

Lillith may not have been fully reinstated, but she seems to be making a comeback.

■ Sybil Sheridan is Minister of the Swindon Jewish Community.



Photo: Sidney Harris — courtesy of 'The Jewish Chronicle'

'Ritual Rights for Women' — a seminar organised by the Sternberg Centre for Judaism at the Manor House. Carrying the scrolls of the law — not the traditional role of women.

status'. Traditionally, a rabbi is not needed to take a service or to preside at a funeral or a wedding — but increasingly he does so; and more and more he is expected to offer pastoral care. An Orthodox rabbi is still first and foremost a *'scholar, adult teacher, exponent of the system'*; but a Reform congregation is likely to have different expectations, feeling perhaps that their rabbi should have some more explicit function: *'We too suffer the gibe of being invisible six days of the week and incomprehensible on the seventh'*.

'It's important to destroy the myth that all Jews are observant and have happy family lives.'

In what other ways does being an 'heir to two cultures' affect him? Lionel Blue has used the phrase 'Holy Materialism' to point the difference between Judaism's fundamental enjoyment of the world and Christianity's flight from it; to distinguish the Jewish belief in the value of wealth from the Christian embrace of poverty. These generalisations were a little too sweeping for Rabbi Bayfield; but he accepted the broad distinction and admitted that he was *'very conscious, living in a Christian world, of that apparently different value system'*. He's never been quite sure how much he should earn, on the one hand desiring the rewards of a skilled professional, on the other *'humbled in the extreme by some of my Christian colleagues' apparent indifference to those kinds of things'*. As the Director of the largest Jewish centre in Europe, he's profoundly grateful to the people who earn enough money to give some away. So he certainly doesn't see as an ideal a society that is *'wholly poverty oriented and devoted to religion'*, any more than he would one that was secular and materialistic: *'I think Jewish life is about creating a balance between economic activity and religious activity and both support each other.'*

For Tony Bayfield, *'theological dialogue and the process of learning more about the varieties of Christian belief'* are helpful in improving his own self-understanding. But he's dubious about

how widely this experience is shared. The average Jew, he believes, is unaware of *'the sophistication of Christian belief and the subtleties...'* There is, of course, much more ignorance the other way round; but then *'it's easier to miss Judaism in our society than it is to miss Christianity'*. Harder to take is prejudice: *'There are still places where "the Jews killed Christ". There are still whole areas in the Christian world where the "anti-Semitism" that does exist within the Gospels hasn't been tackled. And there is, in my view, a lot of anti-Semitism that masquerades as anti-Zionism... there are times when people's attitudes to Israel can be said to betray a certain lack of sympathy and understanding with Jews and Judaism and what the whole Jewish enterprise is all about.'*

There are now some 330,000 Jews in Britain — about 1/2% of the population. They tend to live in certain areas (over half live within a 12 mile radius of the Sternberg Centre itself), supporting each other and the various superstructures of Jewish life. It's easier to be part of a large minority at school than to be the only one; it's easier to transmit your heritage to your children if you're married to another Jew. But British Jews are in a tiny minority and the secular and Christian worlds impinge on them daily. So the idea of a solid community, unshakeable in its convictions, needs to be reassessed: *'It's important to destroy the myth that all Jews are observant and have happy family lives, lighting candles all over the place and drinking chicken soup'*. And the community is weak for another reason: *'we're all — and I think this is something that is just not understood about Jews — we're all survivors and we are all profoundly affected by the trauma of what happened during the Nazi period and only just beginning to grapple with what it all means. There are lots of Jews who don't know what they believe. There are lots of Jews who are extremely muddled. One of the functions of a rabbi at a centre like this is to reach out to Jews wherever they are and to work with them and share with them in picking up the pieces. There's a whole rebuilding process going on and that's why things are so uncertain and so unclear. It's a difficult and painful and challenging time... it's very exciting. Sometimes it's a bit too exciting perhaps.'*

TRADITIONS AND FESTIVALS

The Jewish Calendar

The Jewish calendar is a lunar calendar whose precise relation to the solar calendar varies from year to year. This is an abbreviated version of the Jewish year, omitting several minor festivals and fasts. The dates given are those on which the festivals begin: many of them last for several days.

TISHRI

(Sept/Oct)

- 1 **ROSH HASHANAH** (New Year) (See opposite) The first 10 days of the month are called the **TEN DAYS of REPENTANCE**. They lead up to:
- 10 **YOM KIPPUR** (Day of Atonement) (See opposite)
- 15 **SUCCOT** (Feast of Tabernacles) — Celebrates God's protection during the 40 years spent in the wilderness after leaving Egypt. Jews build booths (tabernacles) to remind themselves of how the Israelites lived in the desert before entering Canaan. The roof of the booth is hung with fruit.
- 23 **SIMCHAT TORAH** (Rejoicing of the Law) — On each Sabbath a portion of the Torah is read in the synagogue. On this day the end of Deuteronomy is reached and the reading starts again with the beginning of Genesis. The Torah scrolls are carried in procession around the synagogue.

HESHVET

(Oct/Nov)

KISLEV

(Nov/Dec)

- 25 **HANUKAH** (Feast of Dedication) — Celebrates the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrians who had tried to suppress the Jewish religion. After the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem the Everlasting Light (the lamp symbolising the presence of the Lord) burned for eight days using oil which should only have lasted for one; hence one new candle of the menorah (eight-branched candlestick) is lit each evening of the eight day festival.

TEVET

(Dec/Jan)

SHEVAT

(Jan/Feb)

ADAR

(Feb/Mar)

- 14 **PURIM** (Lots) — Commemorates the deliverance of the Jews from the extermination planned by Haman, chief minister to the king of the Persians. He cast lots to determine the day on which his plan should be carried out, but the king was warned by his Jewish queen, Esther (whose book is read on this day).

NISAN

(Mar/Apr)

- 15 **PESACH** (Passover) — Celebrates the Exodus from Egypt. The angel of the Lord, in carrying out the 10th plague against all first-born Egyptian children, passed over the houses of the Israelites. The festival also reminds Jews of the other occasions on which they have gained their freedom after a period of oppression. A celebratory meal, the *Seder*, is eaten, at which all the dishes have symbolic meanings.

IYAR

(Apr/May)

SIVAN

(May/June)

- 6 **SHAVUOT** (Feast of Weeks) — In part, a harvest festival which occurs seven weeks after Pesach. But it is also the anniversary of the giving of the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mt. Sinai — the Law which gave the Jews their spiritual freedom, complementing the bodily freedom achieved with the Exodus.

TAMMUZ

(June/July)

AV

(July/Aug)

ELUL

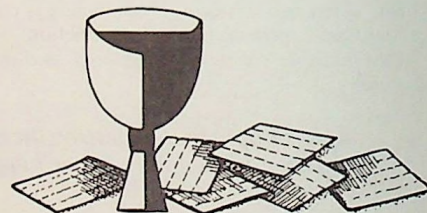
(Aug/Sept)



Simchat Torah — Carrying the Scrolls



Hanukah — The Menorah



Pesach — Unleavened Bread



*Shavuot
— The Giving of the Ten Commandments*

The High Holy Days

This time of the year is the most holy for Jews. **Rosh Hashanah** (literally 'Head of the Year') falls this year on 12 September. It's not just the beginning of the year, commemorating the beginning of God's work of creation. On this day God decides (and, as tradition has it, writes down) the fate of each person for the coming year: the individual must ask for the sins of the past year to be forgiven and promise to try to avoid repeating them. God is always ready to forgive those who genuinely repent; but people must first show their forgiveness to each other. The synagogue ark has a white curtain as a reminder of the need for purification. The *Shofar* (ram's horn) sounds the urgent call to repentance. This has its origins in the ram caught by the horns in a thicket, which Abraham sacrificed instead of his son Isaac: this story is the Torah portion for the day and God is asked to show forgiveness for the sake of Abraham's obedience. Apples dipped in honey are eaten as a sign of the hope for a good year to come.



Sounding the Shofar

Rosh Hashanah is the first of the **Ten Days of Repentance**. For all those not outstandingly good or bad, God allows this time before coming to a conclusive judgement, and during it He watches their efforts at self-improvement. This 'returning to God' is the essence of repentance. The process reaches its climax on the tenth day, **Yom Kippur** ('The Day of Atonement'), the most solemn day of the Jewish year (falling this year on 21 September). The day is mostly spent in prayer and a fast is observed: *'Is not this the fast which I have chosen? To loose the bonds of wickedness . . . and to let the oppressed go free . . . Is it not to deal your bread to the hungry, and that you bring the poor that are cast out to your house?'* (Isaiah 58. 6-7).

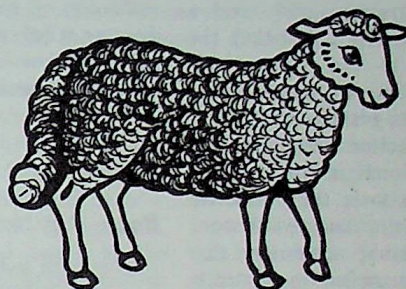
Shabbat

'And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because in it He rested from all His work of creation' (Gen. 2.3).

The weekly *Shabbat* ('Sabbath') begins on Friday evening at sundown and lasts until nightfall on Saturday. So the actual hour it starts and finishes depends on the time of year. It is a day of joy and of rest. Orthodox Jews must not even switch on lights or travel other than on foot; Reform Jews are simply urged not to do any unnecessary work. But the teaching is *'To save a life disregard a Sabbath, that the endangered may observe many Sabbaths'*; so even the most Orthodox Jew will come to the help of anyone in danger. The woman of the house ushers in the Sabbath by lighting two candles and reciting a Hebrew blessing (in an Orthodox home this is done while the father and sons are in the synagogue, before the meal). The man of the house then sanctifies the day over a cup of wine (*Kiddush*) and when everyone has drunk some of this he recites a blessing over the two *Challot* (plaited loaves of bread), before everyone has a piece. He blesses his wife and children; the meal is closed with a sung Grace. On the Saturday there are prayers and readings from the Torah in the synagogue — but most of the day is spent with the family. The Sabbath departs with candlelight, wine and spices. The lingering aroma of the spices symbolises the hope that the special atmosphere of the Sabbath will carry over into the week. The candle is extinguished in the wine. The Sabbath ends when three stars appear in the evening sky.

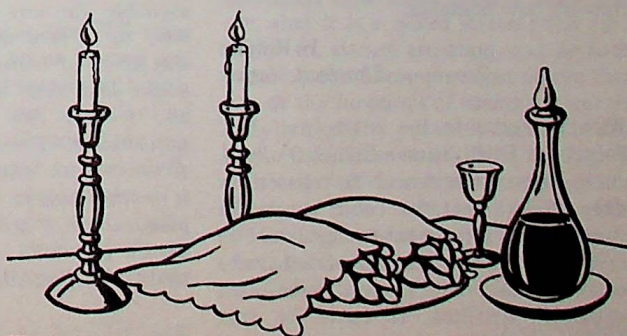
Kosher

There are a number of laws in the Bible which determine the food an observant Jew can eat — such food is called *Kosher* ('fit'). It includes any animal which chews the cud and has cloven hooves (a cow, for example, but not a pig); any fish which has fins and scales (trout, but not shellfish or octopus); and all birds other than birds of prey (with the exception of the swan, stork and partridge). Certain parts of the animal cannot be eaten — nor can blood, so meat must be soaked in salt to remove any that might remain. Kosher animals must be ritually slaughtered by a specially trained butcher, the *Schochet*. His method ensures that pain is kept to the minimum and that the blood is allowed to drain. Finally, meat and milk dishes must not be mixed — so a Jew cannot eat a beef sandwich spread with butter, nor can he drink white coffee after a meat meal (*'You must not boil a kid in its mother's milk'* — Ex. 23.19; 34.26; Deut. 14.21). Some Jews use separate utensils and crockery for meat and milk dishes. No reason is given in the Bible for the dietary laws but Maimonides, the great Jewish philosopher and physician, wrote: *'The dietary laws train us to master our appetites and not to consider eating and drinking as the end of man's existence'*.



Bar Mitzvah

When a boy reaches the age of 13 years and one day he is called a *Bar Mitzvah* (a 'Son of the Commandment'). From then on he is a full member of the religious community, can be called on to read the *Torah* (the five books of Moses) in the synagogue and can be counted in the quorum of ten male members needed for public worship. Usually this passage to maturity is marked by a special ceremony — the boy prepares a portion of the Torah scroll and reads it in a synagogue service. If he is Orthodox he will put on his *Tefillin* for the first time — these are two small leather boxes containing biblical verses, one of which is placed on the upper arm opposite the heart, and one on the forehead. A girl becomes a *Bat Mitzvah* (a 'Daughter of the Commandment') a year earlier, when she is 12. In modern times, a similar ceremony to the boy's has been introduced to give the girl a greater role in Jewish public life — but this is far more common in Reform than in Orthodox communities.



The Sabbath Meal

your letters

We reserve the right to edit letters. Only letters with full name and address will be considered for publication.

Toc H and Christianity

We read and considered the letters headed Toc H and Christianity in *Point 3* (May). We felt, first of all, that no one point of the Compass can be selected as being the most important — they are all interdependent. We were quite strongly agreed that we do want and need a spiritual side. We do not feel that the Christian element in Toc H is 'sadly lacking'. We all try, as members of different churches, to practise our faith in our lives, and our actions stem from the philosophy which Toc H and its literature have formed in us over the years. We agree with C G Martin, that we will work with all and sundry, assuming that anyone who has accepted membership has considered and agreed to the Christian basis of Toc H.

Audrey Elvin
Huddersfield Joint Branch

May I reply to the letter from the residents of the Leicester Community House, which appeared in the May *Point 3*? They might find the words of Peter Monie, taken from his chapter in

The Birthday Book, help them to understand where Toc H stands regarding membership.

'... Toc H is not and does not claim to be a Christian society ... requiring ... a uniform or a minimum standard of Christian belief or practice, or both, at the time of joining ... It is ... quite conscious of its need for a steady inflow of men who were already convinced and practising Christians before they joined ... But it knows, also, that there are very many men, of the greatest value in themselves to Toc H and to the cause for which it stands, who would be excluded by any such initial test. Its theory is that it is both right and safe to admit such men, when they have proved their fitness in other ways, to full membership; right, because these men ... have agreed to trust themselves to the influence of the 'fellowship', and safe because it believes in the prevailing power of the fellowship, if it continues to be directed upwards as well as outwards.'

Anne Booth
Kent

Point 3's New Look

I agree with some points in recent letters you have published about the new look of *Point 3*; it is certainly refreshing. In particular I like the bold covers, new layout of page 2, and the general typographical changes. However the cover is the face of Toc H and I would advocate caution in choosing stark subjects and moral issues too much; let us also have a fair measure of good challenging Toc H work subjects. This leads me to the imbalance of the main contents. I haven't

mind the recent strong presentation of views of prejudice, although I suspect a policy of shock reaction seeking; but how long and how widely can this be continued? How soon does undue pressure turn into prejudicial views? I suggest the main reporting drive should now turn to news of development efforts, both the activity arising from the new officers, and the parallel moves in REC's, areas and branches. Toc H has adopted this enterprise and we must be told all that is happening as good news. Also this must be the right kind of outside publicity.

Gerry Conibeer
Leatherhead

Can I express my thanks to the editorial team for the 'new look' *Point 3*.

I read with interest the series on prejudices. I found myself looking closer into my own prejudices and those around me. I realise now that I am a greater bigot than most, considering that I claim to work for and believe in Toc H and its ethos. But one thing did displease me. If the series was intended to help people such as myself to become more aware of our prejudices, why were only the most 'obvious' three used? What about the prejudices against those who are 'fat/thin' or 'short/tall'? What about the prejudices against the younger element of Toc H members and vice-versa? What about those who live in an area of the country which is very much different to the one they were born and bred in? What about those people, who through no fault of their own, become victims of 'normal' society for a short time but are labelled for the

Toc H Lamps

I would like to say that my branch was disgusted to read (June, *Point 3*) that redundant Toc H lamps are being melted down and destroyed. We respect the lamp, as it is a symbol of all that Toc H stands for. This year we are celebrating 25 years of Toc H projects and are trying to recruit new members. Hopefully we will have new branches who will need these lamps. To destroy them is only a defeatist way of looking at the closed branches, and we should be looking forward to receiving new members and opening new branches.

W Holmes
Elmstead Market

With reference to the letter from A C Britton of Griffithstown Branch (*Point 3*, June), our members wish to register our deep concern that the Toc H lamps, the very symbol of our existence, should be reduced to scrap metal or otherwise destroyed. We are in complete agreement with Mr Griffiths. It could be that younger members of the movement and

newly appointed staff do not fully appreciate the significance of the lamp to the majority of the members. Surely some are also of historical interest — in particular, those first lit by the then Prince of Wales. We appreciate the problem in these days of ageing and reduced membership, resulting in the closure of branches; but we trust our symbol will be maintained and respected.

A W Sendall
Secretary, Long Eaton Branch

There is still a good supply of lamps, available for any new branches which start up. There was some anxiety that the lamps of branches which had closed might find their way into markets etc, and it was felt that this would be unfortunate. There is in fact nothing to distinguish one lamp from another: it is the caskets, with their individual plaques, which are distinctive, and these are all preserved. It is for these reasons that the CEC decided as it did.

John Kilburn
General Secretary

Racial Justice

I am very much enjoying the discussion in *Point 3* on racial matters. I think it's wonderful that this subject was discussed at Cuddesdon and that members are having a chance to think more deeply on the subject. Maybe soon Toc H UK will have the chance of working with other racial groups. I have just received May's *Point 3* (it takes 2 months, surface mail!), and enjoyed Sue Biggerstaff's article 'More than Skin Deep'. Most British members don't understand discrimination. The statement 'School lies at the root of the problem' is, I regret to say, only too true. Whites are taught from an early age that their race is superior. Thank God that we now have an African branch and a multi-racial one in Mutane — they aren't without problems, but we are learning together. Don't be so hard on South Africa — a few folk can't change a country, but let them continue their work quietly. At least Toc H SA is trying to bridge the gap.

T Bryan
Harare, Zimbabwe

rest of their lives as 'manic depressives', 'schizophrenics', 'mentally disturbed'? What about those who commit a 'minor' crime but are labelled criminal for longer than is necessary? What about those who are non-Christians living in a Christian-based society?

Surely prejudice is a far wider circle than the three 'fashionable' ones covered in *Point 3*? It isn't just about the differences between black/white, gay/straight or disabled/abled but about the differences of other people who are different from ourselves. I welcome more articles on more aspects of prejudice, if only to help me to challenge my own prejudices and to help me to live up to my claim to being a believer in Toc H and its ethos.

Philip Walker
Margate

Editorial Style

How many readers of *Point 3*, do you think, will be able to fully understand the ideas you have put before them in your editorial, 'Donald Duck Christianity', in the June issue? I ask this question as I, like many people, was unable to understand many of the more complex words that you used in it. If you really do want *Point 3* readers to know and understand your ideas and point of view, would it not be more sensible for you to change your writing style for one that uses less complicated words? Could you not use a simpler style of language, like the one we hear spoken in everyday life (ie in the street, in the local shop or supermarket, or in the pub)? The reporters on the television or radio, or in the average newspaper (eg the *Daily Mail* or the *Daily Express*) may have to tell the general public about complicated issues, theories or beliefs, but they certainly don't seem to use complicated language to do this. Surely it should not be too difficult for you to simplify the language you use in *Point 3*, so that readers will be able to understand and think about your fresh ideas and point of view on Toc H.

Ray Cox
Wendover

Homosexuality

Some points made in April's *Point 3* still require to be challenged. First, the dismissal of those 'who advocate that homosexuality is unnatural' as 'ill-informed bigots' in Sue Biggerstaff's article. At a branch discussion on this we considered the Toc H pledge 'to lessen by habit of thought, word or deed the prejudice which divides men'. We ask, who divides? Can it be the homosexual who refuses to keep his disorientation under control and those who act as apologists who create the division? Secondly, the editorial, which claims that writing and speaking openly about homosexual relationships does not harm.

THE 1988 COMPETITION



Photo: John Poole

Alan Griffin shows off his 25 Years of Projects T-Shirt in the Queen Elizabeth Gardens, Vancouver, Canada. Alan is the secretary of Vancouver Branch and was given his T-Shirt by John Poole, the Chairman of Kettering Toc H, who recently went to Canada on holiday.

Certainly little harm to some – but what about youth, always vulnerable at this stage of development and more so at this time of history? In 'Disordered Lives – an interpersonal account' (Longmans), two lecturers in mental health at the University of Bristol refer to the problem of the teenage boy as the passive partner of a much older man: 'Because of this relationship the younger man will not develop any competence with the opposite sex and may avoid any kind of relationship with them which will carry a sexual responsibility'. And because a youth is less likely to have AIDS to transmit than an older lover, is he not more likely to be sought as a partner? It will be good if *Point 3* spotlights other minorities such as gypsies and the hippies who have recently been in the news. Better too if we see our times as needing a fundamental reassessment of human behaviour, with Toc H striving for a higher basis of sexual morality.

Dennis Tyler
Secretary, North Hinksey Branch

Mavis

As a former member of the Socialist Workers' Party, and in the unlikely event of any present members reading your magazine, I feel obliged to reply to the article printed in April's *Point 3*, which I have just seen.

The position that the SWP takes on women is that they are an integral part of society, to be valued equally with men. They believe that the condition of women today is a direct result of the way society has developed, particularly economically. Women are members of a male dominated world (no matter what the gender of the Head of State) pressured to stay at home and bring up children.

It is the belief of the SWP that women are not on this earth to service

men, but to make an equal contribution to society in the way they choose, just like men, as equal partners in the world. Their bodies are their own to control, not to be used to sell something – they are not objects for display or to attract attention. Is that not the purpose of Mavis, to attract amused attention? As Clare Smythson points out, "Mavis unfortunately . . . is unquestionably female," not only through being "equipped with breasts and hips," but backed up by possession of a female name. I also doubt the influence of Mavis on the rape statistics, but I find her presence on the Toc H stall more than a little incongruous.

Would a Women's Group object? Probably not. The 'corruption' or parody of the female form in this way, as a total opposite to the standard clothes horse, is an art form they have perfected. While on the subject of feminists, Ms Smythson seems to be falling into the old trap that they should be ugly and wear baggy clothes, preferably dungarees. They must definitely not be glamorous, made up and wearing tight jeans – you are missing the point, sister.

Ms Smythson does not find shop mannequins offensive, nor do I – in shop windows. Essex University can hardly be determined a natural habitat for them. There is no escaping from the plain fact, no matter how many coats of paint you use, that it is a naked female form used solely to attract attention and as such backs up the all too prevalent notion that one of the functions of having a woman's body is that you put it on display. I fully back Clare Smythson's views on Page 3 girls and soft porn, but over this I'm afraid I side with the SWP. The controversy was unintended, the basic idea a good one, but perhaps it was rather an injudicious use of the female form.

Jenni Gosling
St Albans

A Trail of Two Cities

Sue Biggerstaff

Five months of planning finally paid off on 16 and 17 July, when a Trail of Two Cities took place in London and Poperinge. On the Saturday morning eight regional teams picked up the Trail and followed it to places connected with Toc H. All Hallows, Crutched Friars and

former Marks; all featured in the clues and helped to lift the movement's history from the pages of books and old journals.

Twenty-four hours later, the team leaders and eleven Belgian people were cycling in torrential rain through the countryside

surrounding Poperinge. The clues took them to the Pool of Peace, Sanctuary Wood and Ypres, as well as more obscure cemeteries hidden away off main roads. After eight very wet, very sore hours the teams pedalled back to Talbot House, having covered a distance of 40 miles.



Members of the North Wales/North West Team decipher one of the clues in London.

Photo: Sue Biggerstaff



Approaching the Canadian memorial at Saint Julien.

Photo: Judi Edwards

book review

Remembering Auschwitz

The Drowned and The Saved
Premo Levi

Michael Joseph, £10.95

Primo Levi was an Italian Jew, by profession an industrial chemist. During the Second World War he was active in the anti-fascist resistance, but was arrested and deported to Auschwitz in 1944. He survived and through the rest of his life produced a series of books based on his experiences. *The Drowned and the Saved* is about life in the concentration camp; it was the last book he wrote before his suicide in 1987. He writes on behalf of all the victims of the camps, Jews and non-Jews: indeed, he recounts his resistance to the temptation he felt to pray in one of his most desperate moments. It is as an act of man against man that he sees the Holocaust: it is his individual memory with which he tries to come to terms, not the collective memory of the Jewish people; and it is an understanding of the motivations of human beings rather than those of God for which he searches.

One of the most important chapters of the book is called 'The Grey Zone'. Our tendency in looking at human behaviour is to reduce complexity to simple oppositions, of which the concept of the Day of Judgement is the most striking.

Levi's achievement is to be aware of ambiguities without being swallowed up by them: he describes and understands the collaboration of prisoners struggling for survival without ever confusing the persecutors with the victim or the collaborator with the non-collaborator. He is unwilling to subscribe to a false sanctification of the prisoner: 'the harsher the oppression, the more widespread among the oppressed is the willingness to collaborate with the power'. Amongst the earliest impressions of a new arrival was the unforeseen and uncomprehended aggression of the functionary prisoner. The functionaries gained important privileges, such as extra food. Some were put into positions of command whose tenure encouraged and depended on the harsh treatment of those in their power. And then there were the prisoners chosen to run the crematoria, a conscious attempt on the part of the Nazis to make the Jewish sub-race destroy itself, to destroy its soul before corrupting the body. Levi insists that it is not for us to judge the inhabitants of the 'grey zone', though we must understand the inevitability of its existence. We should be grateful that this country was not invaded — there would have been a grey zone here as there was in all the occupied countries.

There is a literary tradition of prison memoirs based on personal experience, especially in Russia, from Dostoevsky in the 19th Century to Solchenitsyn and now Ratushinskaya in the 20th. This work is not comparable with those because the experience of Auschwitz is not comparable even with that of the Siberian labour camp. Nevertheless, there are passages in Dostoevsky's *House of the Dead* which have their echoes in Levi's account and are

brought to a fulfilment unimaginable in the earlier writer. For example, Dostoevsky wrote that through his work, however tedious, the convicts gained a sense of dignity and purpose. 'But if, let us say, he were forced to pour water from one tub into another and back again. . . . I think he would hang himself in order to die, to escape from such degradation, shame and torment. Of course, such a punishment would quickly become a torture, a form of revenge, and would be pointless. . . . It is precisely such gratuitous suffering that Levi describes in his chapter on 'Useless Violence'. The women prisoners at Ravensbrück were set to shovelling sand, each from her own pile on to her neighbour's in a big circle. Levi gives other examples of the infliction of suffering for its own sake, starting with the total lack of provision of food and facilities in the trains transporting the prisoners to the camps. This systematic negligence became a useless cruelty, a deliberate creation of pain which was an end in itself. Once arrived, inmates were forced to parade naked and were totally shaved as well as tattooed with their registration numbers. Soup had to be lapped up without a spoon; though thousands of unused spoons were found at Auschwitz on its liberation. All these humiliations constituted 'a deep wound inflicted on human dignity' of use to the goalers only in so far as they were designed to strip the prisoners of defences and to demonstrate that these were not human beings but animals. The use of human ashes to cover the paths of the SS village was more a triumphal symbolic statement than an example of the extraction of profit from the camps. The same could be said of the practice of stuffing German mattresses with the hair of Jewish victims.



Adrian Dudman and Philip Walker revive each other with orange squash.

The teams have done their bit in completing both Trails; now it's time for Toc H branches to respond. The weekend of 16 – 17 July has proven itself to have been worthwhile, but it must also be successful in financial terms. Although the treasure hunt is over, it's not too late to sponsor the teams!

It is difficult even to read such things. Why did Levi write about them? Certainly not for a cheap shock, not even to call for punishment. He wanted to understand in order to be able to judge properly: he concludes that *'The true crime, the collective, general crime of almost all Germans of that time was that of lacking the courage to speak'*. But above this private aim he wrote with a consciousness of a public duty: *'It is neither easy nor agreeable to dredge this abyss of viciousness and yet I think it must be done, because what it was possible to perpetrate yesterday can be attempted again tomorrow. . . . One is tempted to turn away with a grimace and close one's mind: this is a temptation one must resist'*. We have all lived in a world full of survivors. Even so the Holocaust is little remembered — at least partly because of the over-hurried rehabilitation of Germany *'as the result of an unprincipled political game'*, which prevented there being a sufficient time for national introspection. In a relatively short time no-one will be left to remind us. Levi's sustained act of remembering and testifying was an urgent attempt to face what had happened and to make us so aware of it that nothing like it could even happen again. As Elie Wiesel, another survivor, said earlier this year: *'We remember because we don't want the world to be punished: it is a redemptive element that goes through our memory'*.

Martin Kauffmann

■ Martin Kauffmann is a Ph.D student at the University of London, working on medieval illustrated saints' lives. He comes from a German Jewish family.



The money collected will go into a central fund and divided equally among the regions to be used in financing trips to Poperinge by groups who have never been before. The cause is a worthy one; the closing date is not until 30 September. Please send your donations to:

Ken Prideaux-Brune, Toc H HQ,
1 Forest Close, Wendover,
Bucks HP22 6BT.

Answers to the clues printed in August's
Point 3: 1. Alec.
2. 'Dick' Sheppard.

Nuggets and Ingots

The Blue Guide to the Here and the Hereafter

Lionel Blue with Jonathan Magonet
Collins, £10.95

This is a difficult book to review, because it's an anthology — a collection of extracts from Jewish writings. It's also difficult to be sure what Lionel Blue's part in it is. The prologue tells us that he was mainly responsible for the linking comments, with Jonathan Magonet having the task of discovering texts. Given that division of labour perhaps the cover ought to attribute authorship as 'JONATHAN MAGONET with Lionel Blue'. But Lionel Blue's name will certainly sell more copies. . . . The attribution inside, 'Lionel Blue and Jonathan Magonet', is fairer.

The book itself has a mixed appeal. This is inevitable because different extracts will have something to say to different people. For me there were certainly some nuggets, and one which I commend particularly will bring a nod of wry recognition from any general secretary: *'Committees are places where people keep minutes and waste hours'* (page 45). This is a 'one-liner' but some are of more substance. I particularly liked *'It was obvious'* (page 53) which illustrates a superb (if rather far-fetched) piece of deduction, and *'Card games'* (page 78), another one-liner with appeal to any anxious father-in-law. If those are nuggets there are also two veritable ingots of much fine gold: *'Tonight'* (page 106) and *'There are eight degrees in the giving of charity. . . .'* (page 169). These are too long to

Poperinge

If the growing interest in Talbot House is to be satisfied, more people are needed to take on the responsibility of leading parties. Training and guidance will be offered. If you would like to know more, contact Ken Prideaux-Brune at headquarters.

It is sometimes tempting to suggest that Talbot House has found a new role. In fact it has the role which was planned for it when it was purchased in 1929. The first handbook for visitors, issued as a supplement to the Toc H Journal of 1930, states: *'The Old House is to be no war museum . . . nor is it to be simply a hostel which may serve as a base for 'battlefield tours'. It is to be rather a training place, made more significant by the immense background of the Salient . . . a centre where young Toc H members, the likely leaders of the future, may come for conference, inspiration, refreshment of mind and spirit'*. That remains the policy for the house.

note:

We apologise for stylistic inconsistencies in this issue, which are due to technical problems.

quote in full. But here is a flavour of *'Tonight'*:

A husband is sitting at home with his wife:

*' . . . she looks at you
at the very moment you turn from the
window
and look at her too; and in that glance
everything becomes absolutely clear.
So you get up,
go over to her, your own wife,
put a hand gently on her shoulder
and with the other smooth back her hair,
and want to say many loving things
but you can't.
You look out the window again,
the night dark, the stars bright,
and in your heart is peace.'*

The book is worth reading just for lines like those.

Finally, if I might be allowed a touch of pendency, it is irritating in a glossary to be told *'See also Baal Shem Tov'* (page 218) and, in following that advice, to seek in vain. Also, although it is many years since I was a (Toc H) wolf-cub, I am sure that the item of Boy Scout equipment referred to is the interestingly-named 'woggle', rather than Lionel Blue's much more prosaic 'toggle' (page 23). Collins' dictionary agrees. (This book is published by Collins too!)

John Kilburn

■ John Kilburn is the General Secretary of Toc H.

update

welcome

to Katherine Carter who starts work as an LTV at Alison House.
Mrs Sylvia Norton the new Personal Assistant to the General Secretary.
Mrs Marilyn Young who is now the despatch and stock control person at HQ.

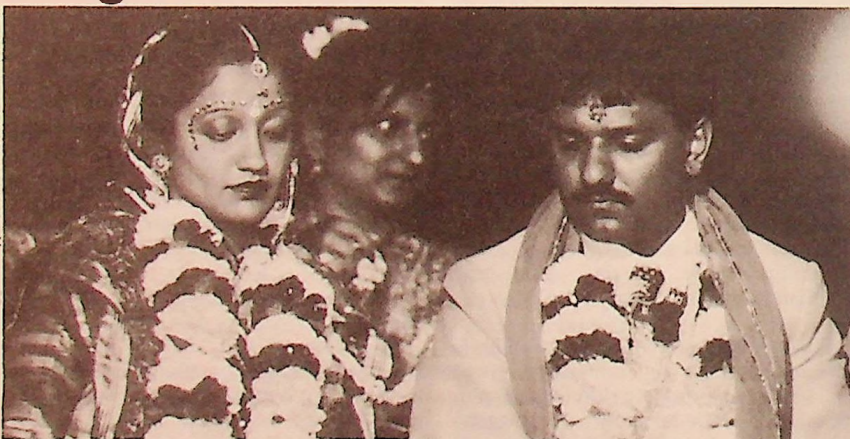
new members

The following new members were registered during June/July:

Anthony Caldwell (Central branch)
Miss Helen Feldon, James W Petrie,
Jan Pearce, (Cleveland District)
Rev. Trevor D Allen (Hartley Wintney M)
Mrs Edith E Dunn, Mrs Enid H Cooper
(Hatfield W)
Mrs Ethel M Chessell, Mrs Olive R Winch
(Parkhurst W)
Herbert E Pittock (Seaford J)
Mrs May S Stewart
(Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay J)
Mrs Irene M Harker (Woking J)
Mrs Jean G Law (Wolverhampton W)

Welcome to 13 new members.

congratulations



June saw the marriage of Satish Visavadia, who a few years ago was a Long Term Volunteer in Leicester and is now active in the Birmingham District. He and his bride Dinta are pictured here during their Hindu wedding ceremony in Coventry.

obituaries

We regret to announce the death of the following members:

In May

Jean I Hadlow (Whitstable)

In June

Bert Cresswell (Wigmore and Rainham)
Olive M Hayward (Springfields District)
George Humphrey (Wulfrun)
John A Lawrence (late Kennington)
Nancy A Rennie (Northants District)

In July

Albert H Barlow (Hartley Wintney)
Vera Bonner (Cleveland District)
Alistair Brown (Largs)
George Cook (Loughborough)
Gus C E Jones (Welshpool)
Lily Beatrice Moore (Netherton)
Elsie L Sage (Downend)
Sidney J Skippings (Bedlington)
Doris M Thornbury (Wroughton)

Not Previously Recorded

Doris E Hall (West Worthing)
Philip H Prior
(North Bucks with Oxford District)
Violet M Sissens (Allestree)

farewell

to Chris Astridge the Composer at HQ, who has left us to work for the BBC. Chris' job has now been taken on by Hazel Scarlett. Craig Howard a workshop supervisor at Uccanduit. His replacement is David Eastman.
Philip Walker who for the last two years has been an LTV in Kent.

Elmstead Toc H reports the death of Douglas Minton. Doug, or 'Minnie', was a long time member of Elmstead Branch before moving to Clacton and joining the men's branch there four and a half years ago. His working life was spent as a social worker in Boys' Clubs, and many people were influenced by him.

MT

Dunton Green Branch has been saddened by the death of Arthur Haley. Arthur was an active and popular member of the branch for the last nine years.

JAR

Wyre Forest Branch were grieved to lose their padre, Bert Hinton during Holy Week. He died as he would have wished, carrying out his priestly duties. Most of his life, Bert had worked as a welder and was ordained in 1980 to the non-stipendiary ministry. He was an accomplished musician, well-known locally as a soloist. He was a very active member of the branch, who will be sorely missed.

WE

Melton Mowbray Men's Branch reports the death of Thomas Bodycote. Tom was highly respected by old and young alike for his ready humour, friendship and love of people. As well as being involved in the Scout Movement for over 60 years, his greatest love was for his parish church, where he was a Sunday school teacher and a sidesman. He will be sadly missed in all walks of life.

We give thanks for their lives

Toc H Hour of Reflection and Prayer

Sunday 11 September 1988

During 1988, the year we celebrate 25 years of Toc H projects, this is a special day in the Toc H calendar. It's the day we ask all members and friends to give up just one hour from 3pm to 4pm in reflection and prayer for the movement.

There will be group events at centres and branches around the country, and there's bound to be one near you. Even if you can't get to one of these, spend the time in your own home by yourself or with friends giving thought and prayer for Toc H in its variety of work, especially projects.

At 4pm, we conclude the Hour with a common prayer, a symbolic statement of our common hope which sums up the Hour:

My thanks are for all that Toc H has been

My desire is for love in the world
My hope is for peace between people
My prayer is for the spirit of Toc H to live

Our joy is in life and light

Alison House is coming of age

We shall soon be celebrating our 21st birthday.

If you would like to join in our Day of Thanksgiving on 29 September

please send an SAE to Liz Bartrop,
Alison House, Intake Lane, Cromford,
Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3RH

What is a Toc H Project?

The article What is a Toc H Project? in July's Point 3 contained a mistake. It should have read: 'The duration of the project should be between a weekend and three weeks.'

DON'T FORGET! The London Event

takes place on **Saturday September 17th** in the grounds of Regents College, Regents Park. The party starts at 11.00am. For details and a booking form, send a self-addressed and stamped envelope to: **The Booking Secretary, Toc H HQ, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Bucks HP22 6BT.**

The Vigil

at St Martin-in-the-Fields Church on the night of the London Event, Beginning at 10.00pm. and ending on the morning of Sunday 18th at 7.30am.

The Publicity Drive

starts in Newcastle on September 9th and will be calling at Edinburgh, Liverpool, Birmingham, Cardiff and Bristol, finishing in London on the 17th.

Warden Manor Awards 1989

The aim of the Warden Manor Awards, as set out in the original terms of the reference, is 'to encourage local initiatives by districts, branches or groups which will extend the influence of Toc H with particular emphasis on the potential for any increase in membership'.

When the selection committee meet, they will be asked to look for applications which will encourage the wider involvement of young people in Toc H, especially in new areas of work with minority groups.

Details and application forms are being distributed this month.

small ads

Small advertisements must be received (with remittance) five weeks before publication day, which is the 23rd of the preceding month. The charge is 5p a word (minimum 50p) plus VAT, to Point Three Magazine. Rates of display advertisements can be obtained from the Editorial Office, Toc H, 1 Forest Close, Wendover. Telephone: 0296 623911.

Hythe, Kent, luxury six berth Mobile Home. Owing to cancellations, we now have vacancies left this year; fully equipped with cooker, fridge, gas fire, WC, shower, TV, radio. Situated on pleasant site with club house and bus service, £60 per week including gas/electric. Contact: Tony Cock, 7 Tournay Close, Lympe, Hythe, Kent CT21 4LL. Tel: 0303 69407.

International clairvoyant and experienced healer. Postal readings available for £6.00. Send a SAE, date of birth and a photo (returnable) to: Constance Catchside, 14 Parkside Close, Churchdown, Gloucester GL3 1JR.

Raise funds quickly, easily. Superb ball-pens, combs, key fobs, diaries, etc gold stamped to your requirements. Details: Northern Novelties, Bradford BD3 8BT.

15 llard gelding. Kind, affectionate, but too hot for middle-aged owner, so not novice ride. Would loan to good -home. Some assistance given with winter keep. Aylesbury 658862



Prideaux House

The Community and Fellowship of
Friends Anonymous Service

Prideaux House is not a hotel, nor a boarding house, nor a hostel. It is the home of a community of people who have found their faith in God very real and relevant.

Our aim is to offer good quality accommodation in a homely atmosphere for that short break in London, near the West End, theatres, shops, museums and concerts. Ideally suited for persons attending conferences, courses, business meetings, interviews, and for those in need of relaxation. Perfect for groups or persons wanting peace and quiet.

Accommodation is offered in The Stanley Coulson Wing of our Community House and Centre in ten single (only) rooms, and all proceeds support our work in Hackney.

Each bedroom has a very high standard of furnishing with own wash-basin. There are good shower facilities, lounges, TV Room, small garden and the Community Chapel. Wholesome cooking is the norm. Sadly, accommodation is not suitable for children, smokers and persons on specific orthodox diets.

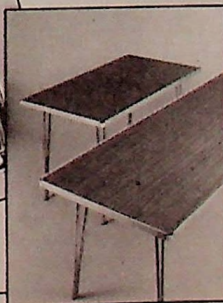
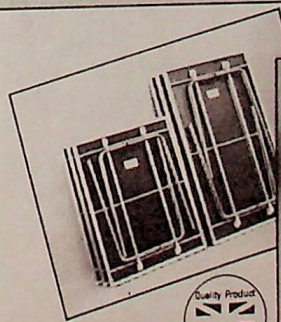
For further information contact:

The Rev Gualter R de Mello, Prideaux House, Ecumenical Interfaith Centre, 10 Church Crescent, London, E9 7DL. Telephone: 01 986 2233.

(If writing, state name of paper, quoting 'ACC/87'.)



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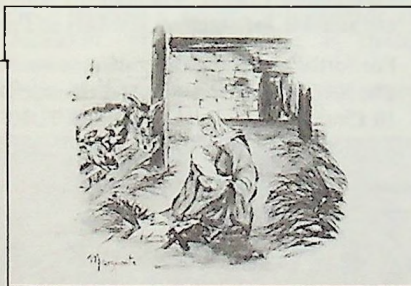
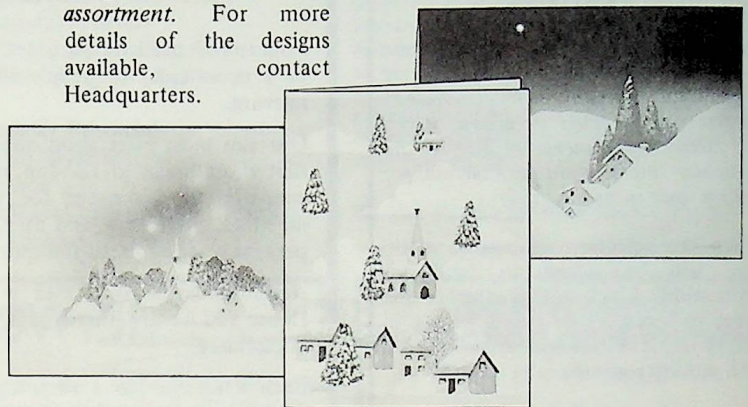
Name
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Postcode TOC

Toc H Christmas Cards

The South West Region has produced three sets of Christmas cards, entitled "Robins", "Religious" and "Winter Scene". The cards measure 3"x4" and are available in packs of 5 at 50p per pack.

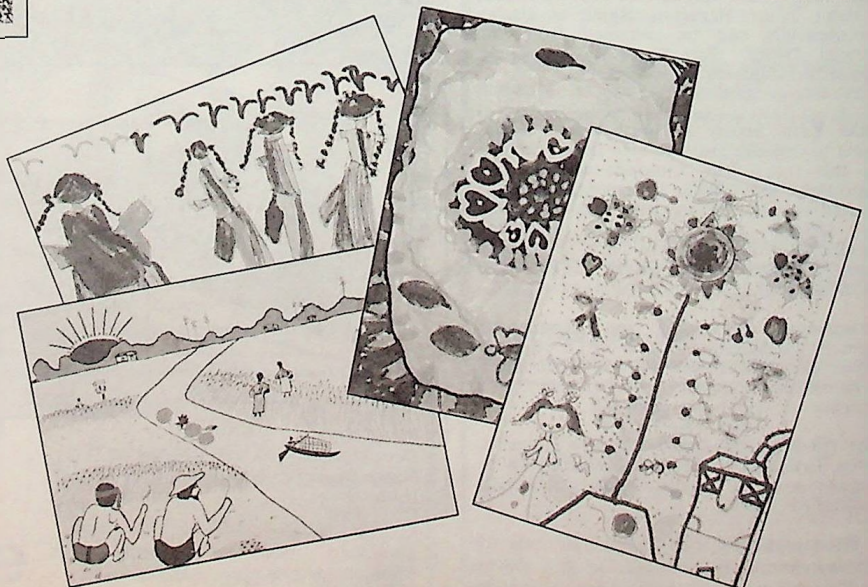


Please note: each pack will contain 5 cards of the same design — *not an assortment*. For more details of the designs available, contact Headquarters.



The cards illustrated here are from the North West Region. Each pack contains six cards and costs 90p, plus 20p postage. *

Cards available in aid of Toc H work in Bangladesh. Attractive, full colour cards made from paintings by children at Khasdobir Primary School, Bangladesh and Harry Gosling Infants' School, London E1. Inside, the one word "Greetings". Sold in packs of 8 (2 of each design) at £1.20 per pack, plus 10p towards postage.



Send your orders to: 'Christmas Cards', Toc H HQ, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Bucks HP22 6BT.